

## Copyright hawks stop music at Dakar Fashion Week parade

DAKAR: The sound may have been muted, but the fashion was not on the opening night of Dakar Fashion Week where models were forced to strut without music as organisers battled the government over copyright fees.

As the parade got underway Wednesday (6 July 2011), an extremely fashionable three hours late, at the swanky Ozio restaurant in downtown Plateau, a gruff official with a clipboard ordered the DJ to turn off the music.

"They are not authorised to organise this parade," said the man, refusing to be named, from the Senegalese Copyright Bureau.

He said that while the restaurant had paid its annual fee which allows it to play music, the parade is "considered a special event" and organisers should have sought permission prior to the show and paid an extra sum of money.

The copyright bureau's website explains that this sum is the "remuneration" of the author of the music played in a public setting. "All who occasionally, or in a manner which is more or less permanent, with or without profit, aim to present the public with musical or dramatic works, become 'entertainers' in the eyes of the law and must apply for permission," it states.

Models showed off creations from Russian-Ghanaian designer Beatrice Bee Arthur, who added sparkle and glamour to short, barely-there dresses to appeal to a Senegalese audience. In Ghana, she told AFP, "We tend to expose our bodies a bit more."

Gucci-trained designer Yolande Mancini, a Senegalese based in Los Angeles, brought her red carpet know-how to Dakar with a string of outfits which "represent a lot where I live in California, but has an African touch as well."

Adama Paris, a Senegalese designer and founder of the fashion week was outraged, and said she refused to pay. "It is corruption, it is a racket, this guy from the government came and stopped the music.

He started with a million (CFA francs, 1,500 euros, US\$2000) and then went down to 400,000 CFA."

*Source: AFP*